



April 13, 2001

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Veterinary Services

National Center for
Import and Export

4700 River Road
Unit 40
Riverdale, MD 20737

Subject: Restrictions of the Importation of all Ruminant and Swine Meat, Meat Products (Including Dairy Products) from Countries Affected with Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD)

To: U.S. Importers, Brokers, and Other Interested Parties

Effective January 15, 2001, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), removed the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man, and Northern Ireland) from the list of regions considered to be free of rinderpest and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) because FMD existence had been confirmed there. In addition, due to confirmed cases of FMD in France, the Republic of Ireland and the Netherlands, APHIS, Veterinary Services (VS), National Center for Import-Export placed temporary import restrictions on the entire European Union (EU) effective February 19, 2001. These temporary import restrictions will be in place while APHIS evaluates current epidemiology, surveillance and veterinary infrastructure data from EU member countries.

These actions prohibit or restrict the importation of ruminant or swine (fresh, chilled or frozen) meat and other unprocessed products of ruminants or swine from the EU. Such products will be refused entry unless they are accompanied by a VS import permit. Permit issuance is based on the product being processed in such a manner as to inactivate the FMD virus as approved by APHIS, or the product having a production date on or before February 19, 2001. If these import criteria cannot be met, the product for importation will be refused entry into the United States.

The USDA is also reviewing its requirements for the importation of milk and milk products from FMD affected regions. The goal is to harmonize the requirements with current science and to provide clarification to the current regulations. This may result in a change to the regulation as written in the Title 9, Code of Federal Regulations, Revised as of January 1, 2000. Advance notification of the changes will be provided.

For a listing of product restrictions from the EU, please visit the APHIS Home page at <www.aphis.usda.gov>, click on Foot-and-Mouth Disease under Hot Issues. Please be advised that import restrictions are extended to other non-animal products which may act as vectors for the FMD virus. Such items include but are not limited to: farm equipment, earthworms, shoes and boots.

APHIS is also re-evaluating all VS permits which authorize the importation of ruminant and/or swine derived material from the United Kingdom to ensure that we have adequate safeguards to prevent the introduction of the FMD virus into the United States.

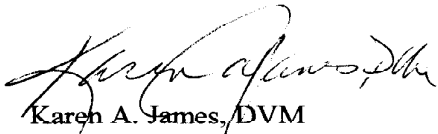


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The result is that many current VS permits to import ruminant and swine products from the EU may be canceled and/or not honored at the port of arrival until a determination for release can be made.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you and hope you can understand our foremost priority: preventing the introduction of FMD into the United States.

Thank you for your cooperation and support.



Karen A. James, DVM
Assistant Director
National Center for Import-Export
Technical Trade Services Staff

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